Working group for assessing requirement of funds

2753. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up a working group to assess, State-wise requirement of fund for the development of tourist ' infrastructure;

(b) if so, the estimate made by the working group for each i States;

(c) the amount sanctioned out of that; and

(d) the allocation made to various States from the sanctioned amount during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The Department of Tourism, Government of India has not set up any working group to assess State-wise requirement of fudns for the development of tourist infrastructure.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

New Technology for Tourism Industry

2754. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether new technology is set to spur the sagging Indian tourism industry which has witnessed a 15% decline during the last fiscal year;

(b) if so, whether online reservations, global distribution system, e-Holiday departments and implementation of sophisticated security systems such as swipe cards is prodding growth in the travel sector;

(c) if so, what are the other details of the new technology that is being considered to improve the tourism sector;

(d) what steps are being taken to implement these new technologies; and

(e) to what extent it has been helpful?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Online reservation systems are being used by the services industry like hotel, travel trade, airlines, railways etc. for booking & reservation of hotel rooms, air & train tickets, packages and other services as required by tourists. The conventional locks have been replaced by swipe cards by some of the leading hotes.

(c) The Department of Tourism, Govt, of India has taken major initiatives in the field of Information Technology with a view to benefit " the tourists. The aim of these initiatives is that the tourist be given information through various information technology mediums such as website, CD ROMs, IVRS, Kiosks, Remote Presence Facilitation System, HARK System etc.

(d) Department of Tourism has implemented information technology initiatives in several ways:—

(1) All the offices of India Tourism in India and abroad are fully automated with use of computers.

(2) The official portal of Department of Tourism— tourismofindia.com has started functioning as the ultimate one stop for providing all information of India to the tourists.

(3) CD Roms on various themes highlighting various aspects of India tourism have been produced for tourists.

(4) An Online Campaign on major websites was launched to create the brand image-Incredible India and to attract traffic to our website.

(5) A fortnightly newsletter is mailed to over 12000 subscribers across the world to give information about the latest happenings in the tourism sector in India.

(6) Financial Assistance to states is also given for undertaking Information Technology projects in their respective states.

(e) The IT initiatives have helped to promote India as a tourist destination to the domestic as well as international tourists by providing them with updated information about India Tourism.